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Obviously it is the ripe fruit of long and patient reflection and of deep experience. The standpoint is that of "intuitionist" ethics. Its author holds, with unwavering courage, to the competence of the human mind to know reality; to the moral nature of man as underived from other and earlier elements, and nowise to be resolved into them; to freedom; to the absolute validity of the moral law; to the supreme authority of conscience, as directly perceptive of the right; to the theistic implications and issues of morality; and to such other "old-fashioned" views as go along with these. But if the opinions are old, the temper is modern. The discussion is marked by an unusual precision and strength of statement, while sometimes rising into a strain of noble eloquence, as, *e. g.*, in the estimate given of the moral meaning of the world's history, and of the ethical illumination and dynamic afforded by Christianity. The work constitutes one of the most acute and effective vindications of intuitive and theistic ethics with which we are acquainted; if it has any lack, it is in an adequate appreciation of the elements of truth contained in other systems: We must wait still for the treatise on ethical theory that shall synthesize in one coherent and complete statement the divers truths which the intuitionist, the evolutionist, the eudæmonist and utilitarian have discerned and defended. And perhaps the time has not yet fully come, though it seems to be at hand, when such a work can be written.

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WM. F. BLACKMAN.

THE CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA. A Course of Lectures on the Early History and Early Conceptions of the Ecclesia; and Four Sermons. By FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT, D.D., Lady Margaret's Reader in Divinity in the University of Cambridge. London: Macmillan & Co., Limited; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1897. \$1.75.

THESE lectures were delivered at the University of Cambridge, England, in 1888 and 1889. Dr. Hort originally intended to examine the evidence on the subject of the ecclesia presented in the history of the early centuries of Christianity, but he failed to carry out his purpose. Still the treatise, as he left it, is quite complete. The effort of the editor of this volume to supply the deficiency by adding four of the author's sermons, preached on different occasions, is hardly a success. These discourses have but a very remote bearing upon the topic discussed in these scholarly lectures.

In this volume the author carefully unfolds the history of the word *ecclesia*. He points out its Hebrew equivalent, its use in the Septuagint, and the manner in which Christ used it in the gospel of Matthew.

He critically examines the account of the call of the apostles and the names by which they are designated. He points out their mission (1) to be with Christ, (2) to preach and teach, and (3) to heal diseases. He sets forth, also, their wider mission, as given at the close of the gospels and in the Acts, and descants on the one "incommunicable" mark of an apostle, that he must be able to bear witness to Christ's resurrection. These apostles, in his view, formed the central, original *ecclesia*, whose mission was to preach and to heal.

The growth of the *ecclesia* after the ascension is next considered. We first see the eleven in the upper room, probably renewing "their coherence as a definite body." Soon after a larger body is mentioned, that attended "steadfastly with one accord upon 'the prayer.'" Here were not only the apostles, but also certain women, the Lord's mother and brethren. Then appear the 120, who, under the lead of Peter, chose Matthias to fill the place of Judas. The pentecost soon followed, when thousands were added to the *ecclesia*. This *ecclesia* became a true, balanced commune of love; "the individuals were not lost in the community, nor the community in the individuals."

Administration was now begun by the apostles; but the work of administration becoming too onerous, and interfering with their higher and more spiritual functions, they laid it off upon the seven who were chosen by the whole *ecclesia* for this special purpose. But this *ecclesia* could not be confined to Jerusalem; it spread throughout Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. It took root on Gentile soil, in Antioch of Syria. It was planted there through the agency of neither apostle nor evangelist, but by the preaching of laymen. It was made up of converted Jews and Gentiles. But its Gentile contingent did not separate it from fellowship with the *ecclesia* at Jerusalem. It sent help to the famine-stricken brethren there, and also laid before them the question whether circumcision was necessary to salvation.

As we move on in the sacred record, the conception of the *ecclesia* constantly grows more comprehensive. In Paul's address, at Miletus, to the elders of Ephesus, we find an especially significant use of the word: "the *ecclesia* of God which he purchased by the blood of his own." It is language which in strictness belongs "only to the one universal Christian *ecclesia*," but it is here used to designate the

individual ecclesia at Ephesus. In the epistles we "find similar investment of parts of the universal ecclesia with the high attributes of the whole." The reason of this is that, while each ecclesia has a corporate life of its own, it is not an isolated society, but a representative member of the universal ecclesia.

The author gives a careful, exhaustive criticism of the use of the term ecclesia in the epistles. This use reveals at the same time the independence of the churches and their community of interest. We learn also from Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians that peace is essential to the ecclesia, the "spirit of schism or division is the very contradiction of the idea of an ecclesia."

In Colossians and Ephesians we have the universal ecclesia. This is accounted for, not so much by Paul's progress in knowledge as by the fact that the danger of division between Jewish and Gentile churches had largely passed away. The middle wall of partition between them had been broken down. Moreover, Paul in Ephesians was setting forth Christ as the head of all things; so that both the fellowship of believers, without respect to nationality, and the demands of the apostle's theological thought made it the fitting moment to declare that there was now not only many ecclesiæ, but also one universal ecclesia, of which Christ was the head. Ideally this ecclesia was coextensive with humanity. To Paul it was "a kind of pledge for the complete fulfillment of God's purpose" to bring, in the dim future, all men into fellowship in Christ.

The author also thoroughly discusses the spiritual gifts bestowed on apostolic churches, as well as the offices and officers of those churches. He maintains that the apostles were not officers; that there were only two classes of officers, the seven and the elders; although deacons mentioned in 1 Tim. 3 and in Phil. 1:1 were "analogous" to the seven. In his view the word *ἐπίσκοπος* is not another name employed to designate the officer called an elder, but is used rather to express an important function of the elder, that of oversight. Of officers higher than elders he finds "nothing like the episcopal system of later times." Still he thinks that we do not find in apostolic history "a set of authoritative precedents to be rigorously copied without regard to time or place." Nevertheless he holds that each ecclesia should be guided by ancient precedent on the one hand, as well as by adaptation to present and future needs on the other. "The lesson-book of the ecclesia, and of every ecclesia, is not a law, but a history."

By way of criticism we wish to say that this is an excellent book. Every page bears the impress of accurate and profound scholarship. The style is clear, simple, and vigorous. Many texts are interpreted in a fresh, suggestive way. The genesis of the early churches is clearly set forth. These lectures are an appreciable addition to our knowledge of the primitive Christian communities.

We doubt, however, the position of the author that *ἐπίσκοπος* simply expresses a function of the elder, and is not another name of that officer. The passages in which the word is found are most naturally interpreted on the supposition that, while it implicitly contains the idea of oversight, it is also another name by which a pastor or an elder was designated. One of his names expressed one of his important functions. Phil. 1 : 1 ; Titus 1 : 5, 7 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 2, 8, are passages which do not easily yield themselves to the interpretation suggested by our author.

Nor has he spoken the last word concerning the authority of apostolic precedent. It is a large and important subject, upon which, for lack of space, we cannot enter. He, however, admits that we should be guided in some measure by "ancient precedent." But why, if such precedents are not binding ? How far shall we be guided by them ? What shall we receive, what shall we reject ? It is possible that the essential features of apostolic churches, clearly set forth in the New Testament, may be, not only history, but also law. Many who have cut loose from apostolic precedents have drifted into ecclesiastical hierarchies and despotisms.

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DER KLEINE KATECHISMUS MARTIN LUTHERS, in seiner jetzt erkannten Bedeutung. Erster Teil : Die Geschichte seiner Vorarbeiten. Mit Benutzung der 1894 veröffentlichten Katechismuspredigten quellenmässig und allgemein verständlich dargestellt. Von Lic. theol. HERMANN HACHFELD, Pastor a. D., Helmstedt. Berlin : Kommissionsverlag von Wiegandt & Grieben, 1897. Pp. xix + 150. M. 2.50.

THIS work is mainly historical. The author's aim is to set forth the preparatory labors which culminated in Luther's Small Catechism, which he justly calls a "wonderful book." That catechism certainly has a place in the church prominent enough to justify this renewed attention to the conditions under which it was produced.